

## United States Postal Service

## § 958.11

### § 958.9 Responsibilities and authority of presiding officer.

(a) The Presiding Officer shall conduct a fair and impartial hearing, avoid unnecessary delay, maintain order, and assure that a record of the proceeding is made.

(b) The Presiding Officer's authority includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(1) Establishing, upon adequate notice to all parties, the date and time of the oral hearing, if any, as well as, in accordance with § 958.7, selecting the hearing site;

(2) Holding conferences, by telephone or in person, to identify or simplify the issues, or to consider other matters that may aid in the expeditious resolution of the proceeding;

(3) Continuing or recessing the hearing in whole or in part for a reasonable period of time;

(4) Administering oaths and affirmations to witnesses;

(5) Ruling on all offers, motions, requests by the parties, and other procedural matters;

(6) Issuing any notices, orders, or memoranda to the parties concerning the proceedings;

(7) Regulating the scope and timing of discovery;

(8) Regulating the course of the hearing and the conduct of the parties and their representatives;

(9) Examining witnesses;

(10) Receiving, ruling on, excluding, or limiting evidence in order to assure that relevant, reliable and probative evidence is elicited on the issues in dispute, but irrelevant, immaterial or repetitious evidence is excluded;

(11) Deciding cases, upon motion of a party, in whole or in part by summary judgment where there is no disputed issue of material fact;

(12) Establishing the record in the case; and

(13) Issuing a written Initial Decision containing findings of fact, conclusions of law, and determinations with respect to whether civil penalties, clean-up costs and/or damages for mailing hazardous materials and/or related violations under 39 U.S.C. 3018 should be imposed, and if so, the amounts thereof, after taking into account the pen-

alty considerations contained in 39 U.S.C. 3018(e).

### § 958.10 Prehearing conferences.

(a) At a reasonable time after issuing the Notice of Docketing and Hearing, and with adequate notice to the parties, the Presiding Officer may conduct, in person or by telephone, one or more prehearing conferences to discuss the following:

(1) Simplification of the issues;

(2) The necessity or desirability of amendments to the pleadings, including the need for a more definite statement;

(3) Stipulations or admissions of fact or as to the contents and authenticity of documents;

(4) Limitation of the number of witnesses;

(5) Exchange of witness lists, copies of prior statements of witnesses, and copies of hearing exhibits;

(6) Scheduling dates for the exchange of witness lists and of proposed exhibits;

(7) Discovery;

(8) Possible changes in the scheduled oral hearing date, time or site, if requested; and

(9) Any other matters related to the proceeding.

(b) Within a reasonable time after the completion of a prehearing conference, the Presiding Officer shall issue an order detailing all matters agreed upon by the parties, or ordered by the Presiding Officer, at such conference.

### § 958.11 Respondent's access to information.

Except as provided in this section, after receiving the Notice of Docketing and Hearing the respondent may review and obtain a copy of all relevant and material documents, transcripts, records, and other materials which relate to the determination of liability by the Determining Official under 39 U.S.C. 3018, and all exculpatory information in the possession of the Determining Official relating to liability for civil penalties, clean-up costs and/or damages for mailing hazardous materials and/or related violations under 39 U.S.C. 3018. The respondent is not entitled to review or obtain a copy of any